

# Columbia College ranked 35<sup>th</sup> among "America's Best Colleges"

By Sarah Stillfield, Coordinator of Public Relations and Marketing, Columbia College

Columbia College earned a top-tier ranking for the third consecutive year in U.S. News & World Report's 2007 edition of "America's Best Colleges." The college ranked 35<sup>th</sup> for the second consecutive year among the schools listed in the Best Comprehensive Colleges—Bachelor's category for the Midwest region. The 2007 report ranks 320 comprehensive colleges within four regions: North, South, Midwest and West.

Institutions included in the Comprehensive Colleges—Bachelor's category focus on undergraduate education and offer a range of degree programs in the liberal arts, accounting for fewer than half of their bachelor's degrees, and in professional fields such as business, nursing and education.

U.S. News & World Report determines its rankings by analyzing data in several areas, including peer assessment, freshman retention, class size, student-to-faculty ratio, student acceptance rate, graduation rate and alumni giving.



Only schools appearing in the top tier in each category receive a ranking. Other tiers are listed in alphabetical order. Data provided for the 2007 edition of "America's Best Colleges" comes from the Day Campus at Columbia College.

"At present, there are over 300 students taking courses with Columbia College in Guantanamo Bay," said Ellen P. Soucy, Director Columbia College. "We just started registration for next session and are offering nine courses locally and over 350 sections online.

We expect a big registration for the October session with the upcoming turnover in the Navy Provisional Guard unit."

The college experienced another year of record enrollment in its Online Campus with a 21 percent increase in online students compared to the fall of 2005. The college also saw a 13 percent increase in the number of graduate students as more of its Nationwide Campuses now are offering graduate degrees.

"In March 2006, we held our first commencement ceremony in Guantanamo. We graduated 29 students at that time. Since March, another four students have completed their degree requirements. We help each student select a degree program that best fits his/her personal goals and provide a plan that can be followed anytime, anywhere," added Soucy. In July of this year Nathan Ouellette and Janell Penha both received their Associates degree in General Studies.

In November, Columbia College expects to start registering qualified students for our online MBA program. The first

six online MBA courses will be offered in Jan. of 2007.

The cost is \$290/credit hour for a total of \$870/course. There is an application fee of \$55 and a diploma fee of \$100, upon completion of the MBA program. Requirements for the MBA program include the following:

- A 3.0 or higher GPA in a completed baccalaureate degree program.

- A Business degree is preferred, but will consider applicants with a BA or BS in other subjects that earned a "B" or higher in the following five courses:

- Principles of Accounting I & II, Business Finance, Principles of Management and Principles of Marketing.

- There is no requirement for a GMAT or GRE for acceptance into our online MBA program and conditional acceptances are possible, on a case-by-case basis.

"Our program continues to grow exponentially, primarily because of the online campus offerings that accommodate those who work shifts or choose to do their studies independently at home. The flexibility of the online program allows all adults to pursue higher education while juggling work, home and family responsibilities. We will continue to offer local courses based on instructor availability, but acknowledge that future growth is in the online program," said Soucy.

The college was founded in 1851 as Christian Female College and was renamed Columbia College in 1970 when it became coeducational.

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